

SENATE BILL 989

By Beavers

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,  
Chapter 50, Part 8 and Title 49, Chapter 6, relative  
to participation in interscholastic activities.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-3050, is amended by adding  
the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

(e)

(1) Students enrolled in home schools shall be permitted to participate in  
interscholastic activities including, but not limited to, athletics, art, music, drama  
and speech, engaged in or sponsored by public schools.

(2) A home schooled student shall be eligible to participate at the public  
school to which the student would be assigned by the local board of education,  
provided, that:

(A) The student legally resides in the school district;

(B) The parent or guardian of the home school student applies in  
writing to the local principal of the school in which the home school  
student plans to participate in interscholastic activities. A home school  
student shall furnish information from a national normed reference test  
that indicates the child is at or above the grade level in which such  
student intends to compete;

(C) The student's parent or guardian applies in writing to the  
principal of the local school at which the student plans to participate in

interscholastic activities before the beginning date of the season for the activity in which the student wishes to participate;

(D) The student adheres to the same standards of behavior, responsibility, performance and code of conduct as other participants of the interscholastic activity and the student meets the same standards for acceptance as a participant in the activity as students from the public school who are participating in the activity; and

(E) The student meets all applicable Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association eligibility requirements not in conflict with this subsection.

(3) Any public school student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic activities as a home schooled student for the duration of the school year in which the student becomes academically ineligible and for the following year. The student shall take the examinations required under subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection at the end of the second year and meet the standards of subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection to become eligible for the third year.

(4) No public school team or group shall be impeded from competing against any other public, private, non-public or church-related school's team or group merely because the school's team or group has home schooled students participating; provided, that the home schooled students participating meet the requirements of this subsection.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-50-801, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

(e)

(1) Students enrolled in church-related schools shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic activities including, but not limited to, athletics, art, music, drama and speech, engaged in or sponsored by public schools.

(2) A church-related schooled student shall be eligible to participate at the public school to which the student would be assigned by the local board of education, provided, that:

(A) The student legally resides in the school district;

(B) The parent or guardian of the church-related school student applies in writing to the local principal of the school in which the church-related school student plans to participate in interscholastic activities. A church-related school student shall furnish information from a national normed reference test that indicates the child is at or above the grade level in which such student intends to compete;

(C) The student's parent or guardian applies in writing to the principal of the local school at which the student plans to participate in interscholastic activities before the beginning date of the season for the activity in which the student wishes to participate;

(D) The student adheres to the same standards of behavior, responsibility, performance and code of conduct as other participants of the interscholastic activity and the student meets the same standards for acceptance as a participant in the activity as students from the public school who are participating in the activity; and

(E) The student meets all applicable Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association eligibility requirements not in conflict with this subsection.

(3) Any public school student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic activities as a church-related schooled student for the duration of the school year in which the student becomes academically ineligible and for the following year. The student shall take the examinations required under subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection at the end of the second year and meet the standards of subdivision (2)(B) of this subsection to become eligible for the third year.

(4) No public school team or group shall be impeded from competing against any other public, private, non-public or home school's team or group merely because the school's team or group has church-related schooled students participating; provided, that the church-related schooled students participating meet the requirements of this subsection.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.